

NEW TRAINING ACCELERATES IMPACT

ABOUT NEW YORK AIR BRAKE CORP. The New York Air Brake Corporation, located in Watertown, New York, is a manufacturer of air brake and train control systems for the railroad industry worldwide. New York Air Brake has been serving the rail industry since 1890. Through the years, their philosophy has reflected a deep respect for the customer, and a commitment to providing quality products at a cost-effective price. New York Air Brake's participation in ISO 9001, and corresponding certification, echoes a company-wide spirit. The company has made significant capital investments in new facilities, machining centers, and test equipment, while increasing efficiency by utilizing highly focused teams in their manufacturing processes. New York Air Brake employs 450 people and remains one of the largest private employers in Jefferson County, New York.

THE CHALLENGE. New York Air Brake, like many manufacturers, continues to be challenged with maintaining the highest quality, increasing manufacturing productivity, reducing lead times to customers, and seeking cost savings in a competitive worldwide market. Because the key to the success is the employees themselves, it was critical to have a well-trained core group of managers and project leaders to drive continuous improvement changes at the Watertown facility. With limitations in time and sufficient training resources, New York Air Brake looked to CITEC, a NIST MEP affiliate, to provide assistance in training their employees.

MEP CENTER'S ROLE. New York Air Brake sent five employees to participate in the CITEC Lean White Belt (LWB) Certification Program, which consisted of 80 hours of classroom training during 8 full-day sessions. Led by CITEC instructors, the training focused on "real world" challenges and opportunities and covered 22 key continuous improvement topics. In addition to simulations and guided discussions, the participants engaged in problem solving, root cause analysis, workplace organization, and the development of standard work and efficient facility layout.

The LWB participants immediately put their newfound skills to use, and the results were significant. By examining rejections in key production cells that were prohibiting shipments, they identified a tolerance issue among two component parts. The company adjusted the specifications to meet production standards and maintain customer requirements. The LWB team also improved the layout in a key work cell to improve productivity and meet increased volume orders from the customer.

"The Lean White Belt Certification program from CITEC enabled us to develop highly trained, motivated and committed internal resources that make an immediate positive impact to our company through hands-on implementation within the facility. Utilizing CITEC as a key training partner has provided quality and consistency."

-John Chatterton, Vice President of Operations

RESULTS



Recognized cost savings of **\$100,000**



Invested **\$50,000** in new equipment



Provided Lean White Belt training for **5** employees

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